

## **Understanding Mechanisms and Reducing Social Inequality: Three Examples in Social Stratification Research**

Social stratification research has investigated the magnitude of disparities and inequalities based on socioeconomic background, gender, race and ethnicity. However, because of the difficulty in defining the causal effects of such attributes (which is precisely what makes this research valuable), causal inference frameworks may not be well-suited for revealing social disparities and inequalities. Nevertheless, recent research on disparities has applied causal inference methods, advancing our understanding of which interventions may mitigate or sustain these disparities. This approach is known as causal decomposition analysis. Building on such an analytical framework, this study applies causal decomposition analysis to three topics within social stratification research: the role of education in social mobility, primary and secondary effects in educational stratification, and intersectional inequalities in educational attainment. Through these analytical methods, the research aims to understand social mechanisms and inform policy interventions aimed at reducing social inequalities.